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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE BILL

No. 661 Session of  
2017

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INTRODUCED BY BRIGGS, FREEMAN, BULLOCK, KINSEY, READSHAW AND  
D. COSTA, FEBRUARY 28, 2017

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, FEBRUARY 28, 2017

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AN ACT

1 Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An  
2 act relating to the public school system, including certain  
3 provisions applicable as well to private and parochial  
4 schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the  
5 laws relating thereto," in terms and courses of study,  
6 providing for media literacy education.

7 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
8 hereby enacts as follows:

9 Section 1. The act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known  
10 as the Public School Code of 1949, is amended by adding a  
11 section to read:

12 Section 1555. Media Literacy Education.--(a) The Department  
13 of Education, in consultation with the State Board of Education,  
14 shall:

15 (1) Develop, within six (6) months of the effective date of  
16 this section, a model, age-appropriate curriculum for students  
17 in kindergarten through grade twelve (12) for media literacy  
18 instruction. Beginning with the school year that commences after  
19 the effective date of this section, a school district shall  
20 incorporate into the school curriculum a component regarding

1 media literacy.

2 (2) The curriculum may include, but need not be limited to:  
3 developing critical thinking skills; understanding how media  
4 messages shape culture and society; identifying target marketing  
5 strategies; naming techniques of persuasion used; recognizing  
6 bias and misinformation; discovering parts of a story that are  
7 not being told; and evaluating media messages based on personal  
8 experiences, skills, beliefs and values.

9 (3) The State Board of Education shall make this curriculum  
10 available on its publicly accessible Internet website.

11 (4) The Department of Education shall make available to  
12 school districts on the Department of Education's Internet  
13 website a list of resources and materials on media literacy and  
14 shall ensure that approved media literacy training opportunities  
15 are made available for use in professional development programs  
16 for teachers.

17 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.